

# ALABAMA

## Poarch Creek Reservation

Federal reservation  
Creek  
Escambia County, Alabama

Poarch Creek Indians  
Route 3, Box 243-A  
Atmore, AL 36504  
(334) 368-9136  
Fax: 368-1026

Total area	229.51 acres
Federal trust	229.51 acres
Total labor force	32/923
High school graduate or higher	27.6%
Total reservation population	190
Tribal enrollment	1,850

### LOCATION AND LAND STATUS

The Poarch Creek Reservation is in southwestern Alabama, 56 miles northeast of Mobile. It was established upon a 1984 BIA recommendation by the federal government in 1985, with 229.51 acres of federal trust land in Escambia County, Alabama. It also has land holdings in other counties in Alabama and Florida.

### CULTURE AND HISTORY

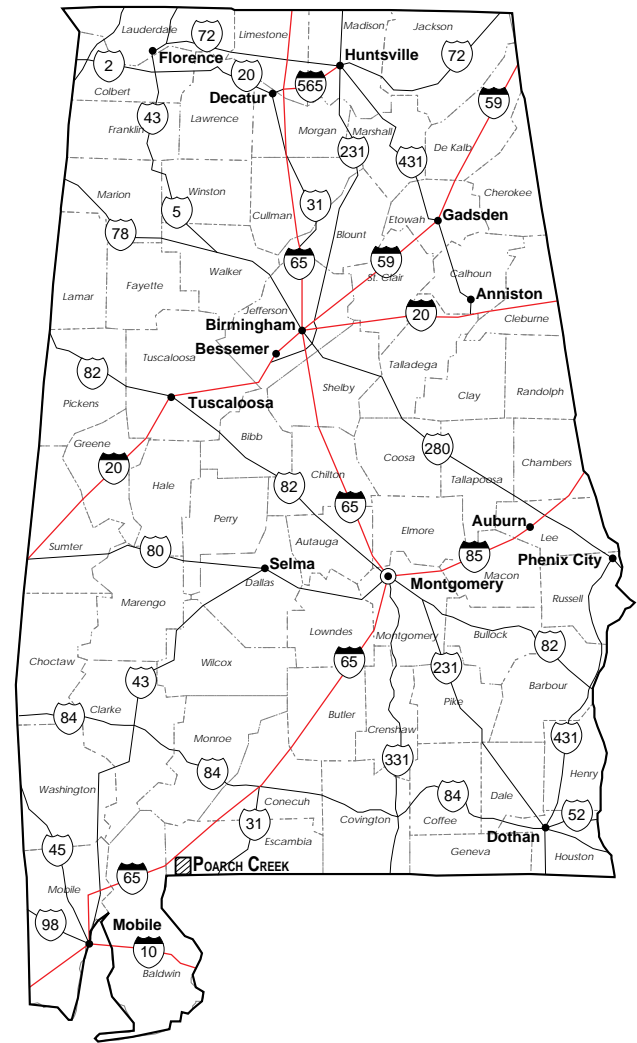
The Poarch Creek Band is descended from Creek Indians who have lived in the locality since the 1700s. Many Creeks remained in their homeland in southwestern Alabama after the Creek Removal of 1836, some with their own land allotments. The town of Poarch served as a focal point for the Indian community, which remained cohesive and kept its identity through many decades without federal recognition and in spite of overt discrimination and segregation. From the 1940s through the 1970s, volunteer political action accomplished very broad legal and moral gains for the Poarch Creek Band, which have led to its present status as a federally recognized Indian tribe with a steadily building tribal economy. The reservation provides services to band members living in five counties in Alabama and Florida.

### GOVERNMENT

The reservation is governed by a nine-member tribal council. A constitution and by-laws were adopted in 1985 pursuant to the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The tribe is a member of the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET).

### ECONOMY

Up until the mid-1970s the annual Thanksgiving Day Pow Wow was the tribe's principal source of revenue; there has been steadily increasing economic activity on the reservation since then. The tribe owns companies manufacturing specialty paints and stainless steel



plates and tags. There is also a tribally owned motel and restaurant. The bingo palace, opened in 1985, has significantly affected the tribe's economy; it became wholly owned by the tribe in 1990.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In 1989 the tribe established by ordinance a Creek Indian Arts Council to further the development of arts and crafts and a museum and tourist attraction at Wetumpka, in Elmore County, Alabama. The tribe also is studying a quilting and sewing operation.

### GAMING

A tribal bingo hall was opened in 1985.

#### GOVERNMENT AS EMPLOYER

By the early 1990s the tribe was employing approximately 350 persons.

#### SERVICES

A bingo hall, motel and restaurant cater to tourists.

#### TOURISM AND RECREATION

The annual Thanksgiving Day Pow Wow is recognized as one of the top tourist attractions in the Southeast.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

The reservation is located 56 miles northeast of Mobile on State

Highway 21 six miles south of U.S. Interstate 80. Atmore, the principal town of the reservation, is at the junction of U.S. Highway 31 and State Highway 21.

#### COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The tribe owns a tribal center, a senior center and a fire station. It has its own tribal police and court. Eighty housing units were completed by 1989. There is an Indian Health Service clinic on the reservation. The reservation provides services such as medical care to band members in a five-county "tribal service area" in Alabama and Florida.